

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SYDNEY 01434 120908Z

17

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SYDNEY 1434

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PINS, OVIP, AS

SUBJ: RESOLUTION OF SINATRA-PRESS-UNION CONFRONTATIONS

SUMMARY: CONFRONTATION BETWEEN FRANK SINATRA AND THEATRICAL AND JOURNALISTS UNIONS WHICH THREATENED HIS TOUR WAS RESOLVED BY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SINATRA'S LAWYER AND PRESIDENT OF THE ACTU, ROBERT HAWKE, WHO ISSUED A JOINT STATEMENT IN WHICH BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED REGRET. THE TOUR WILL GO ON.

1. DURING THE COURSE OF FRANK SINATRA'S CURRENT AUSTRALIAN TOUR, A CONFRONTATION RESULTED BETWEEN SINATRA ON THE ONE HAND AND CERTAIN PRESS AND THEATRICAL UNIONS ON THE OTHER REGARDING ALLEGED MISHANDLING OF THE PRESS BY SECURITY AGENTS, CRITICAL STATEMENTS MADE BY SINATRA REGARDING THE PRESS AND ALLEGED PRESS HARRASSMENT OF SINATRA. CONFRONTATION REACHED A CLIMAX IN MELBOURNE WEDNESDAY NIGHT WHEN SINATRA'S LAST APPEARANCE WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF BAN PLACED UPON IT BY THEATRICAL UNIONS IN SYMPATHY WITH JOURNALISTS UNION. UNION THREATS WERE ALSO MADE TO REFUSE TO REFUEL SINATRA'S PRIVATE PLANE OR ANY COMMERCIAL AIRPLANE THAT MIGHT CARRY HIM, THEREBY THREATENING TO HOLD HIM HOSTAGE PENDING HIS AGREEMENT TO MAKE AN APOLOGY DEMANDED BY THE UNIONS FOR DEPRECATORY REMARKS MADE BY HIM DURING A MELBOURNE PERFORMANCE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SYDNEY 01434 120908Z

WM INCIDENTS INVOLVED INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- (A) CONSTANT HEAVY PRESSURE BY MEDIA PURSUING SINATRA IN SEARCH OF INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPHS.
- (B) SINATRA REFUSAL TO BE INTERVIEWED.
- (C) SOME ROUGHHOUSE BETWEEN SECURITY MEN PROTECTING SINATRA AND PRESS AS SINATRA DEPARTED FROM SOUTHERN CROSS HOTEL IN MELBOURNE, INCLUDING REPORTED INJURIES.
- (D) SINATRA'S AD-LIB REMARKS DURING MELBOURNE PERFORMANCE IN WHICH HE SPOKE IN A DEPRECATORY MANNER OF JOURNALISTS.
- (E) IMPOSITION OF BAN ON SINATRA BY SEVERAL THEATRICAL UNIONS IN MELBOURNE.
- (F) CANCELLATION OF SINATRA'S FINAL MELBOURNE PERFORMANCE.
- (G) REFUSAL OF TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION TO FUEL SINATRA'S CHARTERED PRIVATE AIRCRAFT IN MELBOURNE.
- (H) SINATRA'S RETURN TO SYDNEY WITHOUT REFUELING AND TENTATIVE PLAN TO DEPART TODAY BY COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT.
- (I) THREAT BY TWU TO REFUSE FUEL TO ANY COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT WHICH MIGHT CARRY SINATRA.
- (J) IN THE PRESS, PRESIDENT OF ACTU, ROBERT HAWKE, WAS QUOTED AS INDICATING THAT SINATRA WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME LEAVING THE COUNTRY.
- (K) AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES DISTRICT OF THE AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION THAT HE WOULD APPROACH THE N.S.W. LABOR COUNCIL TO SEEK THE SUPPORT OF 14 AFFILIATED UNIONS TO PUT A BLACK BAN ON ANY FUTURE CONCERTS UNTIL THE SINGER APOLOGIZED.

3. ANTICIPATING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS IMPASSE MIGHT RESULT IN A REQUEST FROM SINATRA TO CONGEN FOR ASSISTANCE, ON THE MORNING OF JULY 11, I TELEPHONED ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF N.S.W. BRANCH OF LABOR PARTY, JOHN DUCKER, TO ESTABLISH A LINE OF COMMUNICATION. DUCKER SAID HE WAS ALREADY IN TOUCH WITH HAWKE WHO HE EXPECTED WOULD ARRIVE IN SYDNEY LATER. TO DUCKER I DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN AN ORDINARY LABOR UNION ACTION AND A THREAT TO IMPEDE MR. SINATRA'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, INCLUDING HOLDING HIM HOSTAGE IN AUSTRALIA, REMINDING DUCKER THAT AUSTRALIAN ATTORNEY GENERAL MURPHY HAD RECENTLY PROPOSED TO PARLIAMENT AN AUSTRALIAN BILL OF RIGHTS BASED ON THE U.N. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH INCLUDES A FLAT GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT OF EVERYONE TO LEAVE ANY COUNTRY. DUCKER TOOK THE POINT AND SAID HE WOULD BE IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SYDNEY 01434 120908Z

TOUCH WITH ME LATER. WE BOTH AGREED THE MATTER SHOULD BE RESOLVED AMICABLY THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS.

4. ABOUT 1400 HOURS JULY 11 I RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM SINATRA'S COUNSEL, MILTON A RUDIN, FOR A MEETING AT 1600 TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION. BEFORE MEETING RUDIN, I HAD TWO TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH DUCKER WHO EXPLAINED THAT HAWKE WOULD ARRIVE SHORTLY AND THAT AN APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN MADE FOR

HAWKE TO MEET RUDIN AT 1745. DUCKER SAID HAWKE HOPED TO WORK OUT A JOINT STATEMENT OF REGRET WHICH WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO BOTH SIDES. WE DISCUSSED THE CONTENT OF SUCH A JOINT STATEMENT IN GENERAL TERMS.

5. AT MY MEETING WITH RUDIN (ACCOMPANIED BY CONSUL FOWLER) HE REVIEWED THE EVENTS OF THE PAST TWO DAYS EMPHASIZING TWO POINTS:

(A) SINATRA'S ALLEGED OFFENSIVE REMARKS REGARDING THE PRESS HAD BEEN GRIEVOUSLY DISTORTED AND EXAGGERATED IN PRESS ACCOUNTS.

(B) ANY INJURIES WHICH MAY HAVE RESULTED FROM SCUFFLING WERE NOT THE FAULT OF MR. SINATRA, WHO WAS PROTECTED BY AUSTRALIAN SECURITY GUARDS HIRED IN MELBOURNE ON ADVICE. AS SINATRA WALKED FROM THE DOOR OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS HOTEL TO AN AWAITING LIMOUSINE, JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS RUSHED HIM IN DEFIANCE OF THE PREVIOUS ADVICE THAT IF THEY WOULD MAINTAIN THEIR DISTANCE, THERE WOULD BE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR PICTURES. IN THE ENSUING SCUFFLE, CAMERAS WERE SWUNG AND A FEW PUNCHES WERE LANDED.

I BRIEFED RUDIN ON THE LOCAL POLITICAL AND LABOR SCENE AND ON MY CONVERSATION WITH DUCKER, AND MY UNDERSTANDING OF HAWKE'S INTENTIONS, INFORMING RUDIN SIMULTANEOUSLY OF HAWKE'S POSITION, NEGOTIATING ABILITIES, AND HIS FORTHRIGHT WILLINGNESS TO STAND UP FOR WHAT HE THINKS IS RIGHT AS ILLUSTRATED BY HIS RECENT READY AND FORTHRIGHT DENUNCIATION OF SENATOR BROWN'S ATTACKS ON AMBASSADOR GREEN, RUDIN, A TOUGH LAWYER AND NEGOTIATOR HIMSELF, APPEARED TO BE WILLING AND INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING A JOINT STATEMENT. RUDIN WAS PARTICULARLY WORRIED ABOUT THE THREAT TO PREVENT SINATRA FROM DEPARTING AND I ASSURED HIM THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 SYDNEY 01434 120908Z

WERE THIS THREAT CARRIED OUT, THIS WOULD BE A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO US.

5. AFTER A THREE AND ONE-HALF HOUR MEETING BETWEEN HAWKE, DUCKER AND RUDIN, DURING PART OF WHICH THEY WERE JOINED BY 15 REPEAT 15 INDEPENDENT UNION REPRESENTATIVES (AND CONSUMED CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES OF RUDIN'S CIGARS AND CHIVAS REGAL), HAWKE AND RUDIN EMERGED AND PRESENTED THE JOINT STATEMENT. ASKED IF HE HAD SEEN SINATRA PERSONALLY, HAWKE SAID CERTAINLY. IN FACT, HE HAD A MEETING OF A FEW MINUTES WITH SINATRA WHO WAS NURSING A COLD. THE JOINT STATEMENT DENIED ANY INTENTION BY SINATRA TO CAST A GENERAL REFLECTION OF THE MORAL CHARACTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIA, BUT RESERVED HIS RIGHT TO CRITICIZE THEM JUST AS THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO CRITICIZE HIS PERFORMANCES. SINATRA EXPRESSED REGRET FOR ANY PHYSICAL INJURY RESULTING FROM

ATTEMPTS TO ENSURE HIS SAFETY. THE UNIONS DENIED ANY DESIRE TO EMBARRASS OR MISREPRESENT SINATRA BUT REAFFIRMED THEIR DESIRE TO KEEP THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC INFORMED AND REGRETTED ANY PHYSICAL INCONVENIENCE CAUSED SINATRA.

6. IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS THIS MORNING WITH RUDIN AND DUCKER, BOTH EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME. SINATRA'S AUSTRALIAN TOUR WILL PROCEED AND ALL THREATS OF PREVENTING HIS DEPARTURE ARE WITHDRAWN.
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